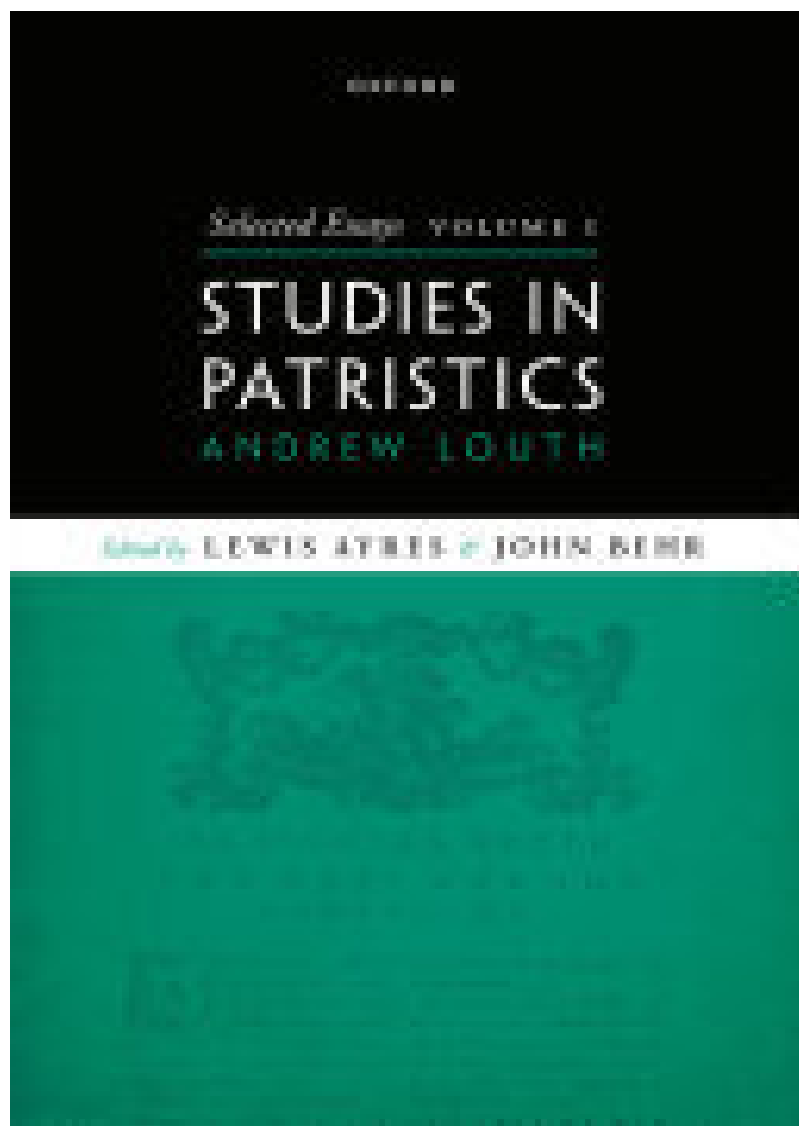


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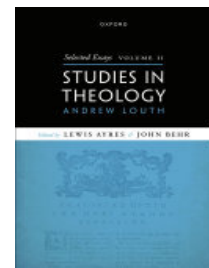


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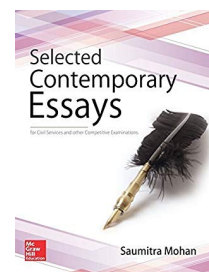
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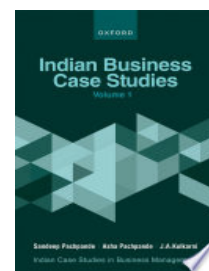
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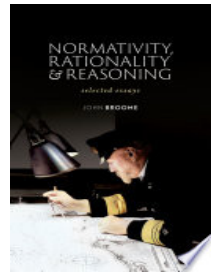
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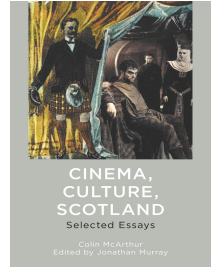
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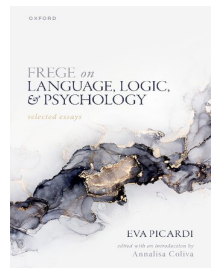
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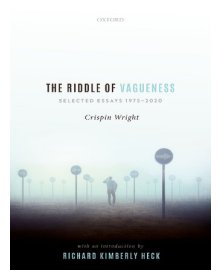
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STUDIES IN PATRISTICS

ANDREW LOUTH

Edited by LEWIS AYRES & JOHN BEHR



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ΝΤΕΣ ΨΕΥΔΕΣ ΑΓΑΠΗΝ, ΚΑΘ'
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Ο Τῆς ΕΙΣ Θεῷ ΑΓΑΠΗΣ ΠΙ ΙΔΩ ΕΧΩ

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*For my offspring
Charlie, Mary, Sarah, and Isaac*

Editors Preface and Acknowledgments

Andrew Louth has been a central figure in the world of Anglophone Patristic studies for the past four decades, and a key theological figure within Orthodoxy (especially Orthodoxy in the diaspora) for three. Andrew is also a thinker known far beyond the world of those devoted to the study of early and Byzantine Christianity, and far beyond the circle of those confessionally Orthodox. His works have been a major source for all those—across many Christian traditions—interested in the work of *ressourcement*, of turning again to the resources of classical Christianity (especially as it is developed in the Greek world between Plato and John Damascene). His monographs cover a considerable range, from his early and much appreciated two volumes *The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition* and *Discerning the Mystery* to his translations and commentaries, and on to his magisterial surveys *John Damascene: Tradition and Development in Byzantine Theology* and *Greek East and Latin West: The Church AD 681–1071*. Andrew's range and depth of knowledge are rendered all the clearer in his reconceptualizing and editing of the fourth edition of the *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (2022).

But alongside these volumes Andrew has always also been a significant essayist; many of his most significant contributions to scholarship and to theology are scattered throughout journals and edited collections, some of which are rather difficult to access. These contributions, often delivered initially as lectures at institutions and to conferences and symposia around the world testify to his range and erudition, as well as to his willingness to contribute to the life of the theological community. The same virtues are, of course, seen in his long contribution as co-editor of the Oxford series "Oxford Early

Christian Studies,” and “Oxford Early Christian Texts.” The present two volumes attempt to reveal something of that range and erudition by presenting seventy-four of his essays, in a selection made by Andrew himself. One notable principle of selection here is that Andrew has not included any of the many pieces he has produced for “handbooks” over many years.

Dividing the essays between the two volumes has presented something of a challenge because Andrew’s work on Patristic theology is also intrinsic to his work as a theologian—the division is not one between history and theology. But neither is it one simply between the theology of the Fathers over against work in modern theology or on modern theologians. Such a divisions would contradict Andrew’s very conception of the manner in which engagement with the Fathers *is* the enduring heart of theological work, however much it also must reflect on the streams of thought that are ours today. The division between the volumes is thus intentionally fluid. Those essays that are most directly focused on exploring the thought and world of figures in the early Christian world (and in a few cases exploring the links between that world and the world of Byzantine Christianity) appear in the first volume. In the second volume many of the essays consider broader theological topics, some focus on Byzantine and modern theological writers (especially some of the great figures of the twentieth-century Orthodox diaspora), while yet others consider the legacy of early Christian theology. The essays in this second volume are offered in chronological order, allowing the reader to gain a sense of how Andrew’s thought has developed. As these essays were written at a variety of points over the past half-century a number of them use styles of expression that reflect the periods in which they were written. We have therefore left the wording of the essays as they were published.

Alongside the editors, a team of Andrew’s former students and friends helped to prepare these essays for publication, especially the arduous task of checking pre-published electronic versions against the final published forms, and turning PDFs into text. We would like

to thank Dr Krastu Banev, Dr Evaggelos Bartzis, Fr Demetrios Bathrellos, Fr Doru Costache, Prof Brandon Gallaher, Fr Antonios Kaldas, Dr Samuel Kaldas, Fr Justin Mihoc, Dr Wagdy Samir, Dr Christopher Sprecher, Dr Gregory Tucker, and Dr Jonathan Zecher.

We also wish to express our gratitude to the Publishers, Journals, and others who have granted permission for the essays collected in these volumes to be reprinted.

Lewis Ayres and John Behr

October 2022

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Abbreviations

Abbreviations used in the essays collected here have been retained from their original publication style; where they are not explained (for instance, some journal or series titles), they may be found in *The SBL Handbook of Style for Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical and Early Christian Studies*, ed. P. H. Alexander et al. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1999).

Introduction

I

Looking at the essays and lectures collected in these volumes, I am struck by the fact that I seem to have been a late developer: in each volume there are only three essays published before 1990, by which time I was in my late 40s—one well before, in 1978, 'The Hermeneutical Question Approached through the Fathers', the rest in the 1980s. So I suppose I was, indeed, a late developer and wonder why. Perhaps not as late as this might suggest, for my first two books came in rapid succession after 1980: *Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition* (1981), and *Discerning the Mystery* (1983). That first book, amazingly well reviewed, rather led to my being classified (still) as someone whose principal interest is in 'mysticism' (in some ways disowned, or contextualized, in the second edition of 2006 with its afterword). On reflection, it seems to me that my interest in the 'mystical tradition' had other roots, for I was not so much interested in 'mysticism' as in a form of religion independent of institutions or dogmas (what has come to be called 'spirituality'), nor in mysticism as, in a tradition revived by William James at the beginning of the nineteenth century, concerned about 'peak experiences', rather my interest was to do with the way in which theology is rooted in prayer, both personal and liturgical.

Discerning the Mystery adumbrated, as I see it now, an approach to theology for which the practice of prayer, and what such practice presupposed, was indispensable—indispensable, not in the sense that theology demanded prayer, and therefore faith, so that the answers had smuggled themselves in before being asked, but

indispensable in that prayer expresses an openness to the transcendent, and therefore calls in question any idea that the nature of things could be encompassed by human conceptuality, ruling out the notion of a closed universe.

There has remained lodged in my memory—largely unconscious, though surfacing from time to time—some lines of thought discussed by Thomas Vargish in his book, *Newman: The Contemplation of Mind* (1970). Discussing Newman's 'illative sense', Vargish spoke of it as 'that "subtle and elastic logic of thought"...elastic and delicate enough to take account of the variousness of reality, the uniqueness of each thing experienced' (p. 68), and a sense of faith, not so much as delivering 'truths', as requiring freedom, in which theology 'makes progress by being "alive to its own fundamental uncertainties"' (p. 87, quoting William Froude). It was a freedom I had sensed in the Fathers' use of Scripture, as discussed in the earliest essay included in these books—a freedom from both the prescriptive nature of Catholic theology and the anxiety of Protestants for a single determinative meaning to be found in Scripture.

I suppose I was beginning to move towards the Orthodoxy of the Eastern Church (as a friend of mine, the late Geoffrey Wainwright, perceptively pointed out to me after reading *Discerning the Mystery*). Another—quite different—aspect of these early books is contained in the subtitle of the first of them: 'From Plato to Denys'. For there had never been any question for me but that that book would begin with Plato—an interpretation of Plato much indebted to A.-J. Festugière's seminal work, *Contemplation et vie contemplative selon Platon* (3rd edition, 1967). Plato has remained important to me—probably returned to more often than to any Christian writer—possibly because of my early enthusiasm for mathematics (and G. H. Hardy's conviction that pure mathematics is concerned with realities, not ideas humanly constructed).

It might seem that, in finding my intellectual feet, as it were, reception into the Orthodox Church, by (then) Bishop Kallistos Ware, soon followed. That was at the end of 1989, the year in which my third book, *Denys the Areopagite*, was published—in response to a

request from Brian Davies, OP, for his series, *Outstanding Christian Thinkers*. I had responded to Brian Davies' suggestion with alacrity, because a year or two before that I had read St John Damascene's *On the Orthodox Faith*, which had fascinated me, in a largely uninformed way, and it already seemed to me that two profound influences on the Damascene were Dionysios the Areopagite and St Maximos the Confessor. Furthermore, my mind was then full of Dionysios, anyway, for I had spent a fallow year in Bodley, reading everything I could find about that mysterious thinker. The sense that, ultimately, I was going to write something on the Damascene led me, a few years later, to agree to the request of Carol Harrison, the editor of the *Early Christian Fathers*, to produce a volume for the series: I chose Maximos the Confessor. Those three books were conceived in sequence—but not as a trilogy, for they are very different, the first on Dionysios—Denys, as I called him then—simply an introduction, the second on Maximos an even shorter introduction accompanied by translations of a brief selection of his works, mostly drawn from his theological, as opposed to his spiritual, works (an opposition unsatisfactory especially in the case of Maximos), and the third a lengthy study of the surviving works of a monk, writing, most likely, in the shadow of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem during the construction of the edifices there celebrating the triumph of Islam.

So I found myself exploring, in a way I had probably not anticipated, what still seem to me the three writers who, together by inheriting and interpreting the Greek patristic tradition, fashioned the lineaments of Byzantine Orthodoxy (and, indeed, its best, and most enduring elements). Plato, and especially the developments of Platonism in late antiquity, remained a preoccupation of mine, and I became more deeply convinced of the coinherence of Platonism and Christianity. The books speak for themselves, and many of the articles in this collection fill out aspects of this Byzantine synthesis of theology and philosophy, prayer and asceticism, and liturgy and song.

II

Perhaps I should say something about influences on my intellectual development, though this is hampered by the oddities (as it certainly must now seem) of my formation as a theologian. I never studied for a PhD (or DPhil), so have no *Doktorvater*. I did, however, while studying for the Anglican priesthood in Edinburgh, enrol for the MTh at the Faculty of Divinity in the university there under Professor Tom (T. F.) Torrance; the subject of my dissertation for that degree was the doctrine of the knowability of God in Karl Barth's theology, the most important sections of which were on the place of natural theology in his *Church Dogmatics* and doctrine of analogy. The chief influence on me during undergraduate years in Cambridge (plus one, preparing for Part III) was without doubt Donald MacKinnon, the Norris Hulse Professor of Divinity, under whose guidance I took two courses in the section on Philosophy of Religion of Part III of the Theological Tripos. Despite this, I could never make much of the style of philosophy of religion that I mostly encountered in Cambridge (I don't think MacKinnon made much sense of it either) and rather made my own way by careful textual study of the texts—Descartes to Kant—that we were expected to read; but it was from MacKinnon's extraordinary Socratic style of engaging with his students that I learnt to think (or rather—though that is perhaps the same thing—discovered that I could think). Another don at Cambridge, with whom I had a few supervisions in patristics, was Maurice Wiles, from whom I learnt a great deal even though largely by way of disagreeing with him—a disagreement that continued when we were both in Oxford from 1970: him as Regius Professor of Divinity, and me as a lecturer in theology in the University and Fellow and Chaplain of Worcester College. That appointment, though probably due to my philosophical training with MacKinnon (a new joint degree in Philosophy and Theology had just been introduced), did not specify what area of theology I was to pursue, so I decided to make myself a patristics scholar, a decision I have never regretted. Also, while in Oxford, I came to know Henry Chadwick,

who moved from the Regius Chair of Divinity to being Dean of Christ Church in 1970, whom I held in awe, though I never got to know him very well (though well enough in the eyes of others to be asked to write his obituary for the *Independent*). I also came to know, in the end very well, academically as a colleague rather than as a student, and more importantly as my spiritual father, the recently departed Metropolitan Kallistos (Ware), the Spalding Lecturer in Eastern Orthodox Studies during my time in Oxford (and before and after): my debt to him is incalculable. There are many others to whom I am indebted, not least the two editors of this volume.

Others who affected my intellectual formation I mainly (or entirely) knew through their books; in the later 1970s (as I remember it), I often devoted the long vacation to reading some massive work that I wanted to come to terms with. One year it was Hans-Georg Gadamer's *Wahrheit und Methode*, which I read in conjunction with the English translation as a crutch for my (then) feeble German. Another year it was A.-J. Festugière's monumental four-volume work, *La Révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste*, the title of which tells you more about its origins (in the notes he made in the course of translating and annotating, with A. D. Nock, the Budé edition of the *Corpus Hermeticum*, published 1945–54), than its contents (a series of soundings in the religious and philosophical thought of late antiquity). Another year it was Henri de Lubac's *Exégèse Médiévale* (4 vols, 1959–64), another work that starts from a particular problem and casts light much more widely. Hans Urs von Balthasar, to whose writings I was introduced by Donald MacKinnon, came later, but I read with excitement *Herrlichkeit* (for which I translated some parts of sections II and III, as part of team led by John Riches), and then *Theodramatik*, and eventually much of *Theologik*.

My encounter with Orthodox thinkers came later, and they seemed to fill out and deepen insights that I had originally discovered in Western writers, such as those already mentioned. It was mostly through reading their works, though I came to know personally several members of the Orthodox Church, of course, Fr

Kallistos (as he then was), Nicolas Zernov, living in retirement in Oxford when I arrived in 1970, and later Father (now St) Sophrony of Essex. One Orthodox thinker whom I read early on was the French convert, Olivier Clément, the disciple of Vladimir Lossky, who has also been a constant presence. Bulgakov became increasingly important to me (I encountered him first in the French translations by Constantin Andronikof), later Florensky (for whom I am indebted to Boris Jakim's translations, though I have struggled myself with his Russian, as well as the Russian of others). I have learnt a great deal about Florensky from Avril Pyman, the author of an acclaimed biography, published in 2010, already by then a great friend. She is an expert on the 'Silver Age' of Russian literature and helped me to see Florensky, and indeed others, such as Vladimir Solov'ev, in the broader cultural context of the Silver Age.

In a not dissimilar way, my encounter with modern Greek theology, not least Christos Yannaras, was consequent on a fairly wide reading in Greek literature—especially the amazing poets of the twentieth century, Cavafy, Sikelianos, Seferis, Elytis—through whom I came to read Philip Sherrard, who translated and interpreted them (but whom, alas, I never met), before I came across his theological writings. The great man of letters, Zisimos Lorentzatos, I also encountered through my reading in Greek literature and had some sense of his theological insights before ever engaging with Yannaras, with whose writings I have tried to keep up over the years (in recent years much aided by Norman Russell's excellent translations). Through Lorentzatos I discovered Alexandros Papadiamandis, which opened up for me layers and layers of the Greek experience of Orthodoxy (a few of whose short stories I was later encouraged to translate). Something of this engagement with Orthodoxy—mostly the fruit of my becoming Orthodox, which seemed to me a fulfilment of my intellectual and spiritual development, not a rejection of the West (although such anti-Westernism has been a *Leitmotiv* of too much Orthodox theology since the beginning of the second Christian millennium)—is to be found in two later works of mine: *Introducing Eastern Orthodox Theology* (2013) and *Modern Orthodox Thinkers*:

From the Philokalia to the Present (2015), which were the result of four years spent as Visiting Professor at the Amsterdam Centre of Eastern Orthodox Theology in the Vrije Universiteit, now the St Irenaeus Institute of Orthodox Theology at the University of Radboud, Nijmegen.

Another stage of my academic career that I have somewhat passed over is my ten years at Goldsmiths College, University of London, from 1985 to 1995. During this period Goldsmiths went through a major change from being an Institute with Recognized Teachers to becoming a School of the University of London. From being head of a small department of Religious Studies I eventually become head—for five years—of a new department of Historical and Cultural Studies, made up of the old departments of History, Art History, and Religious Studies, in which I taught early medieval and Byzantine history, often along with my colleague, Paul Fouracre, a fine Merovingian and Carolingian historian. I learnt, mostly from him, a lot about the ways of the historian's mind—very different were the ways of the theologian's mind—which affected my own way of thinking about history (and indeed theology). Some of the fruits of that are to be found in my volume, *Greek East and Latin West: The Church AD 681–1071* (2007), in the series, *The Church in History*, originally conceived and planned by John Meyendorff.

Have I learnt anything over these years? I hope so, though I am not at all sure what. My writings are mostly studies of others; my aim has been to elucidate their thought and their concerns. It looks like, I daresay, theology as a branch of intellectual history, but one thing I have learnt is that ideas do not—as so many essays in intellectual history seem to imagine—float in some kind of noetic ether; ideas are thought by people, who live at a particular time and in a particular place. Their ideas are part of the way in which they have sought to make sense of the world in which they lived, and theological ideas are no exception: they, too, are the products of human minds seeking to make sense of the place of the Gospel and the Church in a world created by God and governed by his providence, in however mysterious a way. It was with deliberation

(inspired by another who greatly influenced me, Mother Thekla, an Orthodox nun who spent her final years near Whitby in Yorkshire) that I called my book on modern Orthodox theology, *Modern Orthodox Thinkers*.

I cannot end this Introduction without thanking the editors, my friends and colleagues, Lewis Ayres and John Behr, for undertaking to bring this collection of essays of mine to publication. Although the work of publication is theirs, what is to be found in these volumes is, for better or worse, mine, and I would like to dedicate the volumes to my offspring: Charlie, Mary, Sarah, and Isaac.

Andrew Louth
Feast of St Frideswide of Oxford, 2022

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a man does not regard what he personally does or leaves undone as valuable unless it is endorsed by the approval of others from without. The striving for knowledge arises when a man is not content with the world which he sees, hears, etc., so long as he has not understood it. The fulfilment of the striving causes pleasure in the individual who strives, failure causes pain. It is important here to observe that pleasure and pain are attached only to the fulfilment or non-fulfilment of my striving. The striving itself is by no means to be regarded as a pain. Hence, if we find that, in the very moment in which a striving is fulfilled, at once a new striving arises, this is no ground for saying that pleasure has given birth to pain, because enjoyment in every case gives rise to a desire for its repetition, or for a fresh pleasure. I can speak of pain only when desire runs up against the impossibility of fulfilment. Even when an enjoyment that I have had causes in me the desire for the experience of a greater, more subtle, and more exotic pleasure, I have no right to speak of this desire as a pain caused by the previous pleasure until the means fail me to gain the greater and more subtle pleasure. I have no right to regard pleasure as the cause of pain unless pain follows on pleasure as its consequence by natural law, *e.g.*, when a woman's sexual pleasure is followed by the suffering of child-birth and the cares of nursing. If striving caused pain, then the removal of striving ought to be accompanied by pleasure. But the very reverse is true. To have no striving in one's life causes boredom, and boredom is always accompanied by displeasure. Now, since it may be a long time before a striving meets with fulfilment, and since, in the interval, it is content with the hope of fulfilment, we must acknowledge that there is no connection in principle between pain and striving, but that pain depends solely on the non-fulfilment of the striving. Schopenhauer, then, is wrong, in any case, in regarding desire or striving (will) as being in principle the source of pain.

In truth, the very reverse of this is correct. Striving (desire) is in itself pleasurable. Who does not know the pleasure which is caused by the hope of a remote but intensely desired enjoyment? This pleasure is the companion of all labour, the results of which will be enjoyed by us only in the future. It is a pleasure which is wholly independent of the attainment of the end. For when the aim has been attained, the pleasure of satisfaction is added as a fresh thrill to the pleasure of striving. If anyone were to argue

that the pain caused by the non-attainment of an aim is increased by the pain of disappointed hope, and that thus, in the end, the pain of non-fulfilment will still always outweigh the utmost possible pleasure of fulfilment, we shall have to reply that the reverse may be the case, and that the recollection of past pleasure at a time of unsatisfied desire will as often mitigate the displeasure of non-satisfaction. Whoever at the moment when his hopes suffer shipwreck exclaims, "I have done my part," proves thereby my assertion. The blessed feeling of having willed the best within one's powers is ignored by all who make every unsatisfied desire an occasion for asserting that, not only has the pleasure of fulfilment been lost, but that the enjoyment of the striving itself has been destroyed.

The satisfaction of a desire causes pleasure and its non-satisfaction causes pain. But we have no right to infer from this fact that pleasure is nothing but the satisfaction of a desire, and pain nothing but its non-satisfaction. Both pleasure and pain may be experienced without being the consequence of desire. All illness is pain not preceded by any desire. If anyone were to maintain that illness is unsatisfied desire for health, he would commit the error of regarding the inevitable and unconscious wish not to fall ill as a positive desire. When some one receives a legacy from a rich relative of whose existence he had not the faintest idea, he experiences a pleasure without having felt any preceding desire.

Hence, if we set out to inquire whether the balance is on the side of pleasure or of pain, we must allow in our calculation for the pleasure of striving, the pleasure of the satisfaction of striving, and the pleasure which comes to us without any striving whatever. On the debit side we shall have to enter the displeasure of boredom, the displeasure of unfulfilled striving, and, lastly, the displeasure which comes to us without any striving on our part. Under this last heading we shall have to put also the displeasure caused by work that has been forced upon us, not chosen by ourselves.

This leads us to the question, What is the right method for striking the balance between the credit and the debit columns? Eduard von Hartmann asserts that reason holds the scales. It is true that he says (*Philosophie des Unbewussten*, 7th edition, vol. ii. p. 290): "Pain and pleasure exist only in

so far as they are actually being felt.” It follows that there can be no standard for pleasure other than the subjective standard of feeling. I must feel whether the sum of my disagreeable feelings, contrasted with my agreeable feelings, results in me in a balance of pleasure or of pain. But, notwithstanding this, Von Hartmann maintains that “though the value of the life of every being can be set down only according to its own subjective measure, yet it follows by no means that every being is able to compute the correct algebraic sum of all the feelings of its life—or, in other words, that its total estimate of its own life, with regard to its subjective feelings, should be correct.” But this means that rational estimation of feelings is reinstated as the standard of value.¹

It is because Von Hartmann holds this view that he thinks it necessary, in order to arrive at a correct valuation of life, to clear out of the way those factors which falsify our judgment about the balance of pleasure and of pain. He tries to do this in two ways: first, by showing that our desire (instinct, will) operates as a disturbing factor in the sober estimation of feeling-values; *e.g.*, whereas we ought to judge that sexual enjoyment is a source of evil, we are beguiled by the fact that the sexual instinct is very strong in us, into pretending to experience a pleasure which does not occur in the alleged intensity at all. We are bent on indulging ourselves, hence we do not acknowledge to ourselves that the indulgence makes us suffer. Secondly, Von Hartmann subjects feelings to a criticism designed to show, that the objects to which our feelings attach themselves reveal themselves as illusions when examined by reason, and that our feelings are destroyed from the moment that our constantly growing insight sees through the illusions.

Von Hartmann, then, conceives the matter as follows. Suppose an ambitious man wants to determine clearly whether, up to the moment of his inquiry, there has been a surplus of pleasure or of pain in his life. He has to eliminate two sources of error that may affect his judgment. Being ambitious, this fundamental feature of his character will make him see all the pleasures of the public recognition of his achievements larger than they are, and all the insults suffered through rebuffs smaller than they are. At the time when he suffered the rebuffs he felt the insults just because he is

ambitious, but in recollection they appear to him in a milder light, whereas the pleasures of recognition to which he is so much more susceptible leave a far deeper impression. Undeniably, it is a real benefit to an ambitious man that it should be so, for the deception diminishes his pain in the moment of self-analysis. But, none the less, it falsifies his judgments. The sufferings which he now reviews as through a veil were actually experienced by him in all their intensity. Hence he enters them at a wrong valuation on the debit side of his account. In order to arrive at a correct estimate, an ambitious man would have to lay aside his ambition for the time of his inquiry. He would have to review his past life without any distorting glasses before his mind's eye, else he will resemble a merchant who, in making up his books, enters among the items on the credit side his own zeal in business.

But Von Hartmann goes even further. He says the ambitious man must make clear to himself that the public recognition which he craves is not worth having. By himself, or with the guidance of others, he must attain the insight that rational beings cannot attach any value to recognition by others, seeing that "in all matters which are not vital questions of development, or which have not been definitely settled by science," it is always as certain as anything can be "that the majority is wrong and the minority right." "Whoever makes ambition the lode-star of his life puts the happiness of his life at the mercy of so fallible a judgment" (*Philosophie des Unbewussten*, vol. ii, p. 332). If the ambitious man acknowledges all this to himself, he is bound to regard all the achievements of his ambition as illusions, including even the feelings which attach themselves to the satisfaction of his ambitious desires. This is the reason why Von Hartmann says that we must also strike out of the balance-sheet of our life-values whatever is seen to be illusory in our feelings of pleasure. What remains after that represents the sum-total of pleasure in life, and this sum is so small compared with the sum-total of pain that life is no enjoyment and non-existence preferable to existence.

But whilst it is immediately evident that the interference of the instinct of ambition produces self-deception in striking the balance of pleasures and thus leads to a false result, we must none the less challenge what Von Hartmann says concerning the illusory character of the objects to which

pleasure is attached. For the elimination, from the credit-side of life, of all pleasurable feelings which accompany actual or supposed illusions would positively falsify the balance of pleasure and of pain. An ambitious man has genuinely enjoyed the acclamations of the multitude, irrespective of whether subsequently he himself, or some other person, recognises that this acclamation is an illusion. The pleasure, once enjoyed, is not one whit diminished by such recognition. Consequently the elimination of all these “illusory” feelings from life’s balance, so far from making our judgment about our feelings more correct, actually cancels out of life feelings which were genuinely there.

And why are these feelings to be eliminated? He who has them derives pleasure from them; he who has overcome them, gains through the experience of self-conquest (not through the vain emotion: What a noble fellow I am! but through the objective sources of pleasure which lie in the self-conquest) a pleasure which is, indeed, spiritualised, but none the less valuable for that. If we strike feelings from the credit side of pleasure in our account, on the ground that they are attached to objects which turn out to have been illusory, we make the value of life dependent, not on the quantity, but on the quality of pleasure, and this, in turn, on the value of the objects which cause the pleasure. But if I am to determine the value of life only by the quantity of pleasure or pain which it brings, I have no right to presuppose something else by which first to determine the positive or negative value of pleasure. If I say I want to compare quantity of pleasure and quantity of pain, in order to see which is greater, I am bound to bring into my account all pleasures and pains in their actual intensities, regardless of whether they are based on illusions or not. If I credit a pleasure which rests on an illusion with a lesser value for life than one which can justify itself before the tribunal of reason, I make the value of life dependent on factors other than mere quantity of pleasure.

Whoever, like Eduard von Hartmann, puts down pleasure as less valuable when it is attached to a worthless object, is like a merchant who enters the considerable profits of a toy-factory at only one-quarter of their real value on the ground that the factory produces nothing but playthings for children.

If the point is simply to weigh quantity of pleasure against quantity of pain, we ought to leave the illusory character of the objects of some pleasures entirely out of account.

The method, then, which Von Hartmann recommends, viz., rational criticism of the quantities of pleasure and pain produced by life, has taught us so far how we are to get the data for our calculation, *i.e.*, what we are to put down on the one side of our account and what on the other. But how are we to make the actual calculation? Is reason able also to strike the balance?

A merchant makes a miscalculation when the gain calculated by him does not balance with the profits which he has demonstrably enjoyed from his business or is still expecting to enjoy. Similarly, the philosopher will undoubtedly have made a mistake in his estimate, if he cannot demonstrate in actual feeling the surplus of pleasure or, as the case may be, of pain which his manipulation of the account may have yielded.

For the present I shall not criticise the calculations of those Pessimists who support their estimate of the value of the world by an appeal to reason. But if we are to decide whether to carry on the business of life or not, we shall demand first to be shown where the alleged balance of pain is to be found.

Here we touch the point where reason is not in a position by itself to determine the surplus of pleasure or of pain, but where it must exhibit this surplus in life as something actually felt. For man reaches reality not through concepts by themselves, but through the interpenetration of concepts and percepts (and feelings are percepts) which thinking brings about (*cp.* pp. 82 ff.). A merchant will give up his business only when the loss of goods, as calculated by his accountant, is actually confirmed by the facts. If the facts do not bear out the calculation, he asks his accountant to check the account once more. That is exactly what a man will do in the business of life. If a philosopher wants to prove to him that the pain is far greater than the pleasure, but that he does not feel it so, then he will reply: "You have made a mistake in your theorisings; repeat your analysis once more." But if there comes a time in a business when the losses are really so great that the firm's credit no longer suffices to satisfy the creditors,

bankruptcy results, even though the merchant may avoid keeping himself informed by careful accounts about the state of his affairs. Similarly, supposing the quantity of pain in a man's life became at any time so great that no hope (credit) of future pleasure could help him to get over the pain, the bankruptcy of life's business would inevitably follow.

Now the number of those who commit suicide is relatively small compared with the number of those who live bravely on. Only very few men give up the business of life because of the pain involved. What follows? Either that it is untrue to say that the quantity of pain is greater than the quantity of pleasure, or that we do not make the continuation of life dependent on the quantity of felt pleasure or pain.

In a very curious way, Eduard von Hartmann's Pessimism, having concluded that life is valueless because it contains a surplus of pain, yet affirms the necessity of going on with life. This necessity lies in the fact that the world-purpose mentioned above (p. 216) can be achieved only by the ceaseless, devoted labour of human beings. But so long as men still pursue their egoistical appetites they are unfit for this devoted labour. It is not until experience and reason have convinced them that the pleasures which Egoism pursues are incapable of attainment, that they give themselves up to their proper task. In this way the pessimistic conviction is offered as the fountain of unselfishness. An education based on Pessimism is to exterminate Egoism by convincing it of the hopelessness of achieving its aims.

According to this view, then, the striving for pleasure is fundamentally inherent in human nature. It is only through the insight into the impossibility of satisfaction that this striving abdicates in favour of the higher tasks of humanity.

It is, however, impossible to say of this ethical theory, which expects from the establishment of Pessimism a devotion to unselfish ends in life, that it really overcomes Egoism in the proper sense of the word. The moral ideas are said not to be strong enough to dominate the will until man has learnt that the selfish striving after pleasure cannot lead to any satisfaction. Man,

whose selfishness desires the grapes of pleasure, finds them sour because he cannot attain them, and so he turns his back on them and devotes himself to an unselfish life. Moral ideals, then, according to the opinion of Pessimists, are too weak to overcome Egoism, but they establish their kingdom on the territory which previous recognition of the hopelessness of Egoism has cleared for them.

If men by nature strive after pleasure but are unable to attain it, it follows that annihilation of existence and salvation through non-existence are the only rational ends. And if we accept the view that the real bearer of the pain of the world is God, it follows that the task of men consists in helping to bring about the salvation of God. To commit suicide does not advance, but hinders, the realisation of this aim. God must rationally be conceived as having created men for the sole purpose of bringing about his salvation through their action, else would creation be purposeless. Every one of us has to perform his own definite task in the general work of salvation. If he withdraws from the task by suicide, another has to do the work which was intended for him. Somebody else must bear in his stead the agony of existence. And since in every being it is, at bottom, God who is the ultimate bearer of all pain, it follows that to commit suicide does not in the least diminish the quantity of God's pain, but rather imposes upon God the additional difficulty of providing a substitute.

This whole theory presupposes that pleasure is the standard of value for life. Now life manifests itself through a number of instincts (needs). If the value of life depended on its producing more pleasure than pain, an instinct would have to be called valueless which brought to its owner a balance of pain. Let us, if you please, inspect instinct and pleasure, in order to see whether the former can be measured by the latter. And lest we give rise to the suspicion that life does not begin for us below the sphere of the "aristocrats of the intellect," we shall begin our examination with a "purely animal" need, viz., hunger.

Hunger arises when our organs are unable to continue functioning without a fresh supply of food. What a hungry man desires, in the first instance, is to have his hunger stilled. As soon as the supply of nourishment has reached

the point where hunger ceases, everything has been attained that the food-instinct craves. The pleasure which is connected with satiety consists, to begin with, in the removal of the pain which is caused by hunger. But to the mere food-instinct there is added a further need. For man does not merely desire to restore, by the consumption of food, the disturbance in the functioning of his organs, or to get rid of the pain of hunger, but he seeks to effect this to the accompaniment of pleasurable sensations of taste. When he feels hungry, and is within half an hour of a meal to which he looks forward with pleasure, he avoids spoiling his enjoyment of the better food by taking inferior food which might satisfy his hunger sooner. He needs hunger in order to get the full enjoyment out of his meal. Thus hunger becomes for him at the same time a cause of pleasure. Supposing all the hunger in the world could be satisfied, we should get the total quantity of pleasure which we owe to the existence of the desire for nourishment. But we should still have to add the additional pleasure which gourmets gain by cultivating the sensibility of their taste-nerves beyond the common measure.

The greatest conceivable value of this quantity of pleasure would be reached, if no need remained unsatisfied which was in any way connected with this kind of pleasure, and if with the smooth of pleasure we had not at the same time to take a certain amount of the rough of pain.

Modern Science holds the view that Nature produces more life than it can maintain, *i.e.*, that Nature also produces more hunger than it is able to satisfy. The surplus of life thus produced is condemned to a painful death in the struggle for existence. Granted that the needs of life are, at every moment of the world-process, greater than the available means of satisfaction, and that the enjoyment of life is correspondingly diminished, yet such enjoyment as actually occurs is not one whit reduced thereby. Wherever a desire is satisfied, there the corresponding quantity of pleasure exists, even though in the creature itself which desires, or in its fellow-creatures, there are a large number of unsatisfied instincts. What is diminished is, not the quantity, but the “value” of the enjoyment of life. If only a part of the needs of a living creature find satisfaction, it experiences still a corresponding pleasure. This pleasure is inferior in value in proportion as it is inadequate to the total demand of life within a given

group of desires. We might represent this value as a fraction, the numerator of which is the actually experienced pleasure, whilst the denominator is the sum-total of needs. This fraction has the value 1 when the numerator and the denominator are equal, *i.e.*, when all needs are also satisfied. The fraction becomes greater than 1 when a creature experiences more pleasure than its desires demand. It becomes smaller than 1 when the quantity of pleasure falls short of the sum-total of desires. But the fraction can never have the value 0 so long as the numerator has any value at all, however small. If a man were to make up the account before his death and to distribute in imagination over the whole of life the quantity belonging to a particular instinct (*e.g.*, hunger), as well as the demands of this instinct, then the total pleasure which he has experienced might have only a very small value, but this value would never become altogether nil. If the quantity of pleasure remains constant, then with every increase in the needs of the creature the value of the pleasure diminishes. The same is true for the totality of life in Nature. The greater the number of creatures in proportion to those which are able fully to satisfy their instincts, the smaller is the average pleasure-value of life. The cheques on life's pleasure which are drawn in our favour in the form of our instincts, become increasingly less valuable in proportion as we cannot expect to cash them at their full face value. Suppose I get enough to eat on three days and am then compelled to go hungry for another three days, the actual pleasure on the three days of eating is not thereby diminished. But I have now to think of it as distributed over six days, and this reduces its "value" for my food-instinct by half. The same applies to the quantity of pleasure as measured by the degree of my need. Suppose I have hunger enough for two sandwiches and can only get one, the pleasure which this one gives me has only half the value it would have had if the eating of it had stilled my hunger. This is the way in which we determine the value of a pleasure in life. We determine it by the needs of life. Our desires supply the measure; pleasure is what is measured. The pleasure of stilling hunger has value only because hunger exists, and it has determinate value through the proportion which it bears to the intensity of the hunger.

Unfulfilled demands of our life throw their shadow even upon fulfilled desires, and thus detract from the value of pleasurable hours. But we may

speaking also of the present value of a feeling of pleasure. This value is the smaller, the more insignificant the pleasure is in proportion to the duration and intensity of our desire.

A quantity of pleasure has its full value for us when its duration and degree exactly coincide with our desire. A quantity of pleasure which is smaller than our desire diminishes the value of the pleasure. A quantity which is greater produces a surplus which has not been demanded and which is felt as pleasure only so long as, whilst enjoying the pleasure, we can correspondingly increase the intensity of our desire. If we are not able to keep pace in the increase of our desire with the increase in pleasure, then pleasure turns into displeasure. The object which would otherwise satisfy us, when it assails us unbidden makes us suffer. This proves that pleasure has value for us only so long as we have desires by which to measure it. An excess of pleasurable feeling turns into pain. This may be observed especially in those men whose desire for a given kind of pleasure is very small. In people whose desire for food is dulled, eating easily produces nausea. This again shows that desire is the measure of value for pleasure.

Now Pessimism might reply that an unsatisfied desire for food produces, not only the pain of a lost enjoyment, but also positive ills, agony, and misery in the world. It appeals for confirmation to the untold misery of all who are harassed by anxieties about food, and to the vast amount of pain which for these unfortunates results indirectly from their lack of food. And if it wants to extend its assertion also to non-human nature, it can point to the agonies of animals which, in certain seasons, die from lack of food. Concerning all these evils the Pessimist maintains that they far outweigh the quantity of pleasure which the food-instinct brings into the world.

There is no doubt that it is possible to compare pleasure and pain one with another, and determine the surplus of the one or the other as we determine commercial gain or loss. But if Pessimists think that a surplus on the side of pain is a ground for inferring that life is valueless, they fall into the mistake of making a calculation which in actual life is never made.

Our desire, in any given case, is directed to a particular object. The value of the pleasure of satisfaction, as we have seen, will be the greater in proportion as the quantity of the pleasure is greater relatively to the intensity of our desire.² It depends, further, on this intensity how large a quantity of pain we are willing to bear in order to gain the pleasure. We compare the quantity of pain, not with the quantity of pleasure, but with the intensity of our desire. He who finds great pleasure in eating will, by reason of his pleasure in better times, be more easily able to bear a period of hunger than one who does not derive pleasure from the satisfaction of the instinct for food. A woman who wants a child compares the pleasures resulting from the possession of a child, not with the quantities of pain due to pregnancy, birth, nursing, etc., but with her desire for the possession of the child.

We never aim at a certain quantity of pleasure in the abstract, but at concrete satisfaction of a perfectly determinate kind. When we are aiming at a definite object or a definite sensation, it will not satisfy us to be offered some other object or some other sensation, even though they give the same amount of pleasure. If we desire satisfaction of hunger, we cannot substitute for the pleasure which this satisfaction would bring a pleasure equally great but produced by a walk. Only if our desire were, quite generally, for a certain quantity of pleasure, would it have to die away at once if this pleasure were unattainable except at the price of an even greater quantity of pain. But because we desire a determinate kind of satisfaction, we experience the pleasure of realisation even when, along with it, we have to bear an even greater pain. The instincts of living beings tend in a determinate direction and aim at concrete objects, and it is just for this reason that it is impossible, in our calculations, to set down as an equivalent factor the quantities of pain which we have to bear in the pursuit of our object. Provided the desire is sufficiently intense to be still to some degree in existence even after having overcome the pain—however great that pain, taken in the abstract, may be—the pleasure of satisfaction may still be enjoyed to its full extent. The desire, therefore, does not measure the pain directly against the pleasure which we attain, but indirectly by measuring the pain (proportionately) against its own intensity. The question is not whether the pleasure to be gained is greater than the pain, but whether the

desire for the object at which we aim is greater than the inhibitory effect of the pain which we have to face. If the inhibition is greater than the desire, the latter yields to the inevitable, slackens, and ceases to strive. But inasmuch as we strive after a determinate kind of satisfaction, the pleasure we gain thereby acquires an importance which makes it possible, once satisfaction has been attained, to allow in our calculation for the inevitable pain only in so far as it has diminished the intensity of our desire. If I am passionately fond of beautiful views, I never calculate the amount of pleasure which the view from the mountain-top gives me as compared directly with the pain of the toilsome ascent and descent; but I reflect whether, after having overcome all difficulties, my desire for the view will still be sufficiently intense. Thus pleasure and pain can be made commensurate only mediately through the intensity of the desire. Hence the question is not at all whether there is a surplus of pleasure or of pain, but whether the desire for pleasure is sufficiently intense to overcome the pain.

A proof for the accuracy of this view is to be found in the fact, that we put a higher value on pleasure when it has to be purchased at the price of great pain than when it simply falls into our lap like a gift from heaven. When sufferings and agonies have toned down our desire and yet after all our aim is attained, then the pleasure is all the greater in proportion to the intensity of the desire that has survived. Now it is just this proportion which, as I have shown (p. 233), represents the value of the pleasure. A further proof is to be found in the fact that all living creatures (including men) develop their instincts as long as they are able to bear the opposition of pains and agonies. The struggle for existence is but a consequence of this fact. All living creatures strive to expand, and only those abandon the struggle whose desires are throttled by the overwhelming magnitude of the difficulties with which they meet. Every living creature seeks food until sheer lack of food destroys its life. Man, too, does not turn his hand against himself until, rightly or wrongly, he believes that he cannot attain those aims in life which alone seem to him worth striving for. So long as he still believes in the possibility of attaining what he thinks worth striving for, he will battle against all pains and miseries. Philosophy would have to convince man that striving is rational only when pleasure outweighs pain, for it is his nature to strive for the attainment of the objects which he desires, so long as he can

bear the inevitable incidental pain, however great that may be. Such a philosophy, however, would be mistaken, because it would make the human will dependent on a factor (the surplus of pleasure over pain) which, at first, is wholly foreign to man's point of view. The original measure of his will is his desire, and desire asserts itself as long as it can. If I am compelled, in purchasing a certain quantity of apples, to take twice as many rotten ones as sound ones—because the seller wishes to clear out his stock—I shall not hesitate a moment to take the bad apples as well, if I put so high a value on the smaller quantity of good apples that I am prepared, in addition to the purchase price, to bear also the expense for the transportation of the rotten goods. This example illustrates the relation between the quantities of pleasure and of pain which are caused by a given instinct. I determine the value of the good apples, not by subtracting the sum of the good from that of the bad ones, but by the fact that, in spite of the presence of the bad ones, I still attach a value to the good ones.

Just as I leave out of account the bad apples in the enjoyment of the good ones, so I surrender myself to the satisfaction of a desire after having shaken off the inevitable pains.

Supposing even Pessimism were in the right with its assertion that the world contains more pain than pleasure, it would nevertheless have no influence upon the will, for living beings would still strive after such pleasure as remains. The empirical proof that pain overbalances pleasure is indeed effective for showing up the futility of that school of philosophy, which looks for the value of life in a surplus of pleasure (Eudæmonism), but not for exhibiting the will, as such, as irrational. For the will is not set upon a surplus of pleasure, but on whatever quantity of pleasure remains after subtracting the pain. This remaining pleasure still appears always as an object worth pursuing.

An attempt has been made to refute Pessimism by asserting that it is impossible to determine by calculation the surplus of pleasure or of pain in the world. The possibility of every calculation depends on our being able to compare the things to be calculated in respect of their quantity. Every pain and every pleasure has a definite quantity (intensity and duration). Further,

we can compare pleasurable feelings of different kinds one with another, at least approximately, with regard to their intensity. We know whether we derive more pleasure from a good cigar or from a good joke. No objection can be raised against the comparability of different pleasures and pains in respect of their intensity. The thinker who sets himself the task of determining the surplus of pleasure or pain in the world, starts from presuppositions which are undeniably legitimate. It is possible to maintain that the Pessimistic results are false, but it is not possible to doubt that quantities of pleasure and pain can be scientifically estimated, and that the surplus of the one or the other can thereby be determined. It is incorrect, however, to assert that from this calculation any conclusions can be drawn for the human will. The cases in which we really make the value of our activity dependent on whether pleasure or pain shows a surplus, are those in which the objects towards which our activity is directed are indifferent to us. If it is a question whether, after the day's work, I am to amuse myself by a game or by light conversation, and if I am totally indifferent what I do so long as it amuses me, then I simply ask myself: What gives me the greatest surplus of pleasure? And I abandon the activity altogether if the scales incline towards the side of displeasure. If we are buying a toy for a child we consider, in selecting, what will give him the greatest pleasure, but in all other cases we are not determined exclusively by considerations of the balance of pleasure.

Hence, if Pessimistic thinkers believe that they are preparing the ground for an unselfish devotion to the work of civilisation, by demonstrating that there is a greater quantity of pain than of pleasure in life, they forget altogether that the human will is so constituted that it cannot be influenced by this knowledge. The whole striving of men is directed towards the greatest possible satisfaction that is attainable after overcoming all difficulties. The hope of this satisfaction is the basis of all human activity. The work of every single individual and the whole achievement of civilisation have their roots in this hope. The Pessimistic theory of Ethics thinks it necessary to represent the pursuit of pleasure as impossible, in order that man may devote himself to his proper moral tasks. But these moral tasks are nothing but the concrete natural and spiritual instincts; and he strives to satisfy these notwithstanding all incidental pain. The pursuit of

pleasure, then, which the Pessimist sets himself to eradicate is nowhere to be found. But the tasks which man has to fulfil are fulfilled by him because from his very nature he wills to fulfil them. The Pessimistic system of Ethics maintains that a man cannot devote himself to what he recognises as his task in life until he has first given up the desire for pleasure. But no system of Ethics can ever invent other tasks than the realisation of those satisfactions which human desires demand, and the fulfilment of man's moral ideas. No Ethical theory can deprive him of the pleasure which he experiences in the realisation of what he desires. When the Pessimist says, "Do not strive after pleasure, for pleasure is unattainable; strive instead after what you recognise to be your task," we must reply that it is human nature to strive to do one's tasks, and that philosophy has gone astray in inventing the principle that man strives for nothing but pleasure. He aims at the satisfaction of what his nature demands, and the attainment of this satisfaction is to him a pleasure. Pessimistic Ethics, in demanding that we should strive, not after pleasure, but after the realisation of what we recognise as our task, lays its finger on the very thing which man wills in virtue of his own nature. There is no need for man to be turned inside out by philosophy, there is no need for him to discard his nature, in order to be moral. Morality means striving for an end so long as the pain connected with this striving does not inhibit the desire for the end altogether; and this is the essence of all genuine will. Ethics is not founded on the eradication of all desire for pleasure, in order that, in its place, bloodless moral ideas may set up their rule where no strong desire for pleasure stands in their way, but it is based on the strong will, sustained by ideal intuitions, which attains its end even when the path to it is full of thorns.

Moral ideals have their root in the moral imagination of man. Their realisation depends on the desire for them being sufficiently intense to overcome pains and agonies. They are man's own intuitions. In them his spirit braces itself to action. They are what he wills, because their realisation is his highest pleasure. He needs no Ethical theory first to forbid him to strive for pleasure and then to prescribe to him what he shall strive for. He will, of himself, strive for moral ideals provided his moral imagination is sufficiently active to inspire him with the intuitions, which give strength to his will to overcome all resistance.

If a man strives towards sublimely great ideals, it is because they are the content of his will, and because their realisation will bring him an enjoyment compared with which the pleasure which inferior spirits draw from the satisfaction of their commonplace needs is a mere nothing. Idealists delight in translating their ideals into reality.

Anyone who wants to eradicate the pleasure which the fulfilment of human desires brings, will have first to degrade man to the position of a slave who does not act because he wills, but because he must. For the attainment of the object of will gives pleasure. What we call the good is not what a man must do, but what he wills to do when he unfolds the fulness of his nature. Anyone who does not acknowledge this must deprive man of all the objects of his will, and then prescribe to him from without what he is to make the content of his will.

Man values the satisfaction of a desire because the desire springs from his own nature. What he attains is valuable because it is the object of his will. If we deny any value to the ends which men do will, then we shall have to look for the ends that are valuable among objects which men do not will.

A system of Ethics, then, which is built up on Pessimism has its root in the contempt for man's moral imagination. Only he who does not consider the individual human mind capable of determining for itself the content of its striving, can look for the sum and substance of will in the craving for pleasure. A man without imagination does not create moral ideas; they must be imparted to him. Physical nature sees to it that he seeks the satisfaction of his lower desires; but for the development of the whole man the desires which have their origin in the spirit are fully as necessary. Only those who believe that man has no such spiritual desires at all can maintain that they must be imparted to him from without. On that view it will also be correct to say that it is man's duty to do what he does not will to do. Every Ethical system which demands of man that he should suppress his will in order to fulfil tasks which he does not will, works, not with the whole man, but with a stunted being who lacks the faculty of spiritual desires. For a man who has been harmoniously developed, the so-called ideas of the Good lie, not without, but within the range of his will. Moral action consists, not in the

extirpation of one's individual will, but in the fullest development of human nature. To regard moral ideals as attainable only on condition that man destroys his individual will, is to ignore the fact that these ideals are as much rooted in man's will as the satisfaction of the so-called animal instincts.

It cannot be denied that the views here outlined may easily be misunderstood. Immature youths without any moral imagination like to look upon the instincts of their half-developed natures as the full substance of humanity, and reject all moral ideas which they have not themselves originated, in order that they may "live themselves out" without restriction. But it goes without saying that a theory which holds for a fully developed man does not hold for half-developed boys. Anyone who still requires to be brought by education to the point where his moral nature breaks through the shell of his lower passions, cannot expect to be measured by the same standard as a mature man. But it was not my intention to set down what a half-fledged youth requires to be taught, but the essential nature of a mature man. My intention was to demonstrate the possibility of freedom, which becomes manifest, not in actions physically or psychically determined, but in actions sustained; by spiritual intuitions.

Every mature man is the maker of his own value. He does not aim at pleasure, which comes to him as a gift of grace on the part of Nature or of the Creator; nor does he live for the sake of what he recognises as duty, after he has put away from him the desire for pleasure. He acts as he wills, that is, in accordance with his moral intuitions; and he finds in the attainment of what he wills the true enjoyment of life. He determines the value of his life by measuring his attainments against his aims. An Ethical system which puts "ought" in the place of "will," duty in the place of inclination, is consistent in determining the value of man by the ratio between the demands of duty and his actual achievements. It applies to man a measure that is external to his own nature. The view which I have here developed points man back to himself. It recognises as the true value of life nothing except what each individual regards as such by the measure of his own will. A value of life which the individual does not recognise is as little acknowledged by my views as a purpose of life which does not spring from

the value thus recognised. My view looks upon the individual as his own master and the assessor of his own value.

ADDITION TO THE REVISED EDITION (1918).

The argument of this chapter is open to misapprehension by those who obstinately insist on the apparent objection, that the will, as such, is the irrational factor in man, and that its irrationality should be exhibited in order to make man see, that the goal of his moral endeavour ought to be his ultimate emancipation from will. Precisely such an illusory objection has been brought against me by a competent critic who urged that it is the business of the philosopher to make good what animals and most men thoughtlessly forget, viz., to strike a genuine balance of life's account. But the objection ignores precisely the main point. If freedom is to be realised, the will in human nature must be sustained by intuitive thinking. At the same time we find that the will may also be determined by factors other than intuition, and that morality and its work can have no other root than the free realisation of intuition issuing from man's essential nature. Ethical Individualism is well fitted to exhibit morality in its full dignity. It does not regard true morality as the outward conformity of the will to a norm. Morality, for it, consists in the actions which issue from the unfolding of man's moral will as an integral part of his whole nature, so that immorality appears to man as a stunting and crippling of his nature.

¹ Those who want to settle by calculation whether the sum total of pleasure or that of pain is bigger, ignore that they are subjecting to calculation something which is nowhere experienced. Feeling does not calculate, and what matters for the real valuing of life is what we really experience, not what results from an imaginary calculation. ↑

² We disregard here the case where excessive increase of pleasure turns pleasure into pain. ↑

THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE GENUS

The view that man is a wholly self-contained, free individuality stands in apparent conflict with the facts, that he appears as a member of a natural whole (race, tribe, nation, family, male or female sex), and that he acts within a whole (state, church, etc.). He exhibits the general characteristics of the community to which he belongs, and gives to his actions a content which is defined by the place which he occupies within a social whole.

This being so, is any individuality left at all? Can we regard man as a whole in himself, in view of the fact that he grows out of a whole and fits as a member into a whole?

The character and function of a member of a whole are defined by the whole. A tribe is a whole, and all members of the tribe exhibit the peculiar characteristics which are conditioned by the nature of the tribe. The character and activity of the individual member are determined by the character of the tribe. Hence the physiognomy and the conduct of the individual have something generic about them. When we ask why this or that in a man is so or so, we are referred from the individual to the genus. The genus explains why something in the individual appears in the form observed by us.

But man emancipates himself from these generic characteristics. He develops qualities and activities the reason for which we can seek only in himself. The generic factors serve him only as a means to develop his own individual nature. He uses the peculiarities with which nature has endowed him as material, and gives them a form which expresses his own individuality. We seek in vain for the reason of such an expression of a man's individuality in the laws of the genus. We are dealing here with an individual who can be explained only through himself. If a man has reached the point of emancipation from what is generic in him, and we still attempt to explain all his qualities by reference to the character of the genus, then we lack the organ for apprehending what is individual.

It is impossible to understand a human being completely if one makes the concept of the genus the basis of one's judgment. The tendency to judge according to the genus is most persistent where differences of sex are involved. Man sees in woman, woman in man, almost always too much of the generic characteristics of the other's sex, and too little of what is individual in the other. In practical life this does less harm to men than to women. The social position of women is, in most instances, so low because it is not determined by the individual characteristics of each woman herself, but by the general ideas which are current concerning the natural function and needs of woman. A man's activity in life is determined by his individual capacity and inclination, whereas a woman's activity is supposed to be determined solely by the fact that she is just a woman. Woman is to be the slave of the generic, of the general idea of womanhood. So long as men debate whether woman, from her "natural disposition," is fitted for this, that, or the other profession, the so-called Woman's Question will never advance beyond the most elementary stage. What it lies in woman's nature to strive for had better be left to woman herself to decide. If it is true that women are fitted only for that profession which is theirs at present, then they will hardly have it in them to attain any other. But they must be allowed to decide for themselves what is conformable to their nature. To all who fear an upheaval of our social structure, should women be treated as individuals and not as specimens of their sex, we need only reply that a social structure in which the status of one-half of humanity is unworthy of a human being stands itself in great need of improvement.¹

Anyone who judges human beings according to their generic character stops short at the very point beyond which they begin to be individuals whose activity rests on free self-determination. Whatever lies short of this point may naturally become matter for scientific study. Thus the characteristics of race, tribe, nation, and sex are the subject-matter of special sciences. Only men who are simply specimens of the genus could possibly fit the generic picture which the methods of these sciences produce. But all these sciences are unable to get as far as the unique character of the single individual. Where the sphere of freedom (thinking and acting) begins, there the possibility of determining the individual according to the laws of his genus ceases. The conceptual content which

man, by an act of thought, has to connect with percepts, in order to possess himself fully of reality (*cp.* pp. 83 ff.), cannot be fixed by anyone once and for all, and handed down to humanity ready-made. The individual must gain his concepts through his own intuition. It is impossible to deduce from any concept of the genus how the individual ought to think; that depends singly and solely on the individual himself. So, again, it is just as impossible to determine, on the basis of the universal characteristics of human nature, what concrete ends the individual will set before himself. Anyone who wants to understand the single individual must penetrate to the innermost core of his being, and not stop short at those qualities which he shares with others. In this sense every single human being is a problem. And every science which deals only with abstract thoughts and generic concepts is but a preparation for the kind of knowledge which we gain when a human individual communicates to us his way of viewing the world, and for that other kind of knowledge which each of us gains from the content of his own will. Wherever we feel that here we are dealing with a man who has emancipated his thinking from all that is generic, and his will from the grooves typical of his kind, there we must cease to call in any concepts of our own making if we would understand his nature. Knowledge consists in the combination by thought of a concept and a percept. With all other objects the observer has to gain his concepts through his intuition. But if the problem is to understand a free individuality, we need only to take over into our own minds those concepts by which the individual determines himself, in their pure form (without admixture). Those who always mix their own ideas into their judgment on another person can never attain to the understanding of an individuality. Just as the free individual emancipates himself from the characteristics of the genus, so our knowledge of the individual must emancipate itself from the methods by which we understand what is generic.

A man counts as a free spirit in a human community only to the degree in which he has emancipated himself, in the way we have indicated, from all that is generic. No man is all genus, none is all individuality; but every man gradually emancipates a greater or lesser sphere of his being, both from the generic characteristics of animal life, and from the laws of human authorities which rule him despotically.

In respect of that part of his nature for which man is not able to win this freedom for himself, he forms a member within the organism of nature and of spirit. He lives, in this respect, by the imitation of others, or in obedience to their command. But ethical value belongs only to that part of his conduct which springs from his intuitions. And whatever moral instincts man possesses through the inheritance of social instincts, acquire ethical value through being taken up into his intuitions. In such ethical intuitions all moral activity of men has its root. To put this differently: the moral life of humanity is the sum-total of the products of the moral imagination of free human individuals. This is Monism's confession of faith.

¹ Immediately upon the publication of this book (1894), critics objected to the above arguments that, even now, within the generic character of her sex, a woman is able to shape her life individually, just as she pleases, and far more freely than a man who is already de-individualised, first by the school, and later by war and profession. I am aware that this objection will be urged to-day, even more strongly. None the less, I feel bound to let my sentences stand, in the hope that there are readers who appreciate how violently such an objection runs counter to the concept of freedom advocated in this book, and who will interpret my sentences above by another standard than that of man's loss of individuality through school and profession. ↑

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